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ABSTRACT

This teacher's guide to the "Carrascolendas 400 Series," a bilingual (Spanish/English) television program, provides information about the main points made in each program. The guide gives teachers tips on how to use the television series to explore important issues with their students, and the "activity corner" section of each program description in the guide can serve to illustrate some appropriate activities for children in the elementary grades. Carrascolendas (the name is that of an imaginary village whose inhabitants live a bilingual and multicultural way of life) has as its goal the affirmation of Hispanic values for Hispanic children in the preschool and elementary levels of school (5-8 years old). The series seeks to transmit specific beliefs about persons, cultures, and the enviornment. These beliefs are as follows: (1) mastering one's self is important--this includes expressing one's feelings; (2) being able to understand and speak two languages is better than being able to communicate in only one; (3) cultural diversity is a good thing if people work together; (4) people from all groups and social levels should be respected as persons; (5) people can make an important difference in other people's lives, and the quality of our lives depends to a great extent on how we treat others and how others treat us. (SR)

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TEACHER'S TELEVISION GUIDE

THE 400 SERIES

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CARRASCOLENDAS

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CARRASCOLENDAS

Overview

CARRASCOLENDAS (400), a new Spanish and English bilingual television series for children five-to-eight years of age, is a KLRN production, funded by the U.S. Office of Education. The themes which are woven throughout the 39 programs deal with cultural pride, the environment, and, most importantly, with the challenges and questions which children face in the process of living and in the challenge of growing up.

CARRASCOLENDAS is a mythical village whose inhabitants live a bilingual and multicultural way of life. The children and the adult characters in the programs reflect the Black, Anglo, Mexican-American, Cuban and Puerto Rican life styles, young and old, and are constantly learning from one another and affirming the value of this diversity and their sense of community.

Several beliefs about persons, cultures, and the environment underlie the series:

First, mastering one's self, being able to express one's emotions and direct one's inner life, is as important to good living as the development of the mind and acquiring a formal education. For whatever else one achieves in life, one must first achieve happiness.

Secondly, being able to understand and speak two languages is better than being able to communicate in only one. Although the instances of a formal instruction in English and Spanish are few in number and of short duration, CARRASCOLENDAS should promote at least a degree of understanding of a second language for children who speak only one. More importantly, however, the show should help motivate children to learn the two languages or to continue to develop both if they are already bilingual.

Thirdly, a society can have many diverse groups and still be a healthy place to live if people respect their differences and work together to build a strong community. The cultural diversity of different groups in one society presents everyone with opportunities to share these intangible riches, leading to individually satisfying lives.

Fourth, people of all stations in life should be respected as persons. Professionals, farm workers, owners of small businesses – all have essential roles to play for the good of society.

Finally, people are the most effective influence on other people. Because of this, the quality of our lives depends to a great extent on how we treat others and how others treat us.

Although the series is aimed at children, all the viewers of CARRASCOLENDAS will have much to discuss with one another.

SUGGESTED ACTIVITIES

Whenever you can, watch CARRASCOLENDAS with your class. By reading the program descriptions in this guide to them before the program is aired, you and the children will be alert to the main points each will make.

The themes for all of the 39 programs were selected for their relevant entertainment and educational value for children, primarily. But many of the ideas brought out in humor, song, and magic are really life themes which have bearing on adults as well. Because of this, CARRASCOLENDAS offers all its viewers – children and adults, males and females, members of all ethnic groups – a unique opportunity to communicate at a very personal level about ideas and feelings and desires.

You, as one of the important adults in your children's lives, can use CARRASCOLENDAS constructively by having them reflect on the meaning of the programs and apply the lessons to themselves. You can do this directly or by capitalizing on an occasion when it arises.

In general, you can take the initiative by asking your children what occurred in a program and what it meant. You can expand upon the ideas presented by discussing them or by recounting an event in your life which in some way was similar. It is important to encourage the children in your class to verbalize their feelings and to recall experiences which reflect the theme or moral presented in the story line. Your children's vocabulary and their ability to express themselves in both English and Spanish can be expanded in this way. Ask them, "What is the Spanish word for such and such?" or "Como se dice eso en ingles?"

Your children may themselves initiate a conversation with you or with one another about a program. When this happens you'll know that a program holds a special interest for them, and you should try to follow up in an appropriate manner, perhaps by using a suggestion from the Activity Corner for that program.

There are three things you need to be careful about, however.

- First, don't be heavy-handed. Feelings and attitudes are not always easy to discuss or to change, even for children.
- Second, don't be superficial, be honest. Children are very intuitive and understand, in this manner, a lot more than some adults give them credit for.
- Third, give them an opportunity to disagree with you, to believe things which you don't believe without risking the loss of your affection or attention.

GENERAL PROCEDURES FOR CLASSROOM ACTIVITIES

Whenever possible, arrange for a large group (whole class) viewing of a program and be sure to see it yourself. Don't be overly concerned with shushing the children or directing their attention, since few people give a TV program their undivided attention. Your own reactions will probably serve to refocus their attention, and children themselves discipline one another to keep any serious interference from happening. Ordinarily one can expect the children viewing the program will laugh or speak out spontaneously.

Be on the lookout for new words or phrases — in English and in Spanish — which a program may introduce, so that you yourself may use them later, during both formal language instruction and informal interaction. In particular, use English and Spanish expressions which are peculiar to one or another ethnic group. CARRASCOLENDAS is a multi-ethnic program, and the expressions of Black and Anglo speakers of English as well as the saying of the Cuban, Mexican-American, and Puerto Rican speakers of Spanish offer opportunities for children to broaden their range of expressions.

You may, of course, direct the learning of the children, preferably a short time after the show has been viewed by them. Ask them to recall parts of the story and to name and explain the event they liked most. Beyond these initial activities, the Activity Corner of each program description in this guide can serve to illustrate some appropriate activities for children in the early elementary grades. Again, CARRASCOLENDAS is oriented to touch the child's feelings. To get the most out of the following activities, several conditions must prevail:

- First, don't give the children the impression that they must agree with you, else they'll give you "expected" answers and maintain discussion at a safely superficial level.
- Secondly, don't press for consensus. Many of these issues are ones which children will ultimately resolve for themselves, whatever they agree to for the present. In short, there will be a certain amount of ambiguity in many of the topics which the class discusses, and not every resolution may be the one you would prefer.

Many of the program themes will reflect real interpersonal problems in your classroom. When this occurs, you may have to facilitate a serious session with your students when they can share real feelings and attitudes with you and with one another without the threat of punishment.

There will also be a number of opportunities to refer children to the themes of certain past programs. Some of these occasions will be spontaneous, and you may take advantage of the moment to "remind" children that their actions relate to an issue previously discussed. Also, in discussing some programs you or some of your children may see a relationship to a previous show. This kind of insight should be encouraged, since it indicates a relatively sophisticated level of analysis and facilitates learning about the "new" idea by relating it to the "old" one.

This teacher's Guide to CARRASCOLENDAS will acquaint you with the programs, and its suggested activities will illustrate the type of informal interaction between teacher and children which should help children discover that being children and growing up – both – make the good life.

Does Somebody Special Live Here **Show #401**

As the leadoff program in the new CARRASCOLENDAS series, this show is designed to be both instructive and to introduce the regular cast to the viewing public.

The show is initiated by Pepper, the lady detective, who is moving to CARRASCOLENDAS. To find out not only something about its inhabitants but also about how they view one another, she cleverly leaves a very large envelope by the town mailbox addressed to "La persona más especial de Carrascolendas," that is, "The Most Special Person in Carrascolendas," and the fun starts from there.

The cast in order of appearance are:

Pepper, the female detective
Campamocha, owner of La Palanca, Carrascolendas' Fix-it Shop
Uncle Andy, the shoemaker, and Tio Cheo, the toymaker. These two uncles are their own foils, for they are as different – and as alike – as people can be.
Caracoles, owner of the restaurant El Nopal
Señorita Hernandez, the schoolteacher, wise and warm and helpful – in two languages
Agapito is a familiar character to many children already. He is the bilingual lion who lives in Carrascolendas.
Dyana and Berta are the two live dolls who work and live in Tio Cheo's *juguetería*. Each is very different from the other, but both enjoy merriment.
Mabel the Magician lives in no specified place in Carrascolendas, but always pops in and out of scenes magically.

The theme of the show is that everyone is different from everyone else, yet special in certain ways. People are of different ages, have different occupations, and the like, and each has a role or a potential role in the general scheme of things. Furthermore, each person can make unique contributions to others.

It is essential for children to begin thinking about themselves as special persons and to become aware of how they are influenced by and in turn influence others, even as they are growing up. Preschool children may be able to understand only the first few implications, whereas children who are seven or eight years old could make almost all of these ideas applicable to themselves if examples of persons important to their lives were used.

ACTIVITY CORNER

Ask the children to name some of the ways a particular classmate is special. Then ask them to name a few ways which make themselves special — and don't be satisfied with an answer like "I'm not special," or "I study a lot"; make them look inside themselves.

Ask the children to plan cooperatively a demonstration of some of the things they like to do best — art work, crafts, a puppet show, etc. — so that others can enjoy some of their special qualities.

Above all, respect each child's feelings, ideas and contributions. Each one is a unique individual.

The Late Lion — Show #402

Young children are often puzzled by time and references to time in our everyday speech. A child hears people say that they have to *hurry* to do something *on time*, that visitors will be coming over *tomorrow*, that *next week* eventually becomes *today* and is thereafter referred to as *yesterday* or *some time ago*. Children are sometimes told to *wait a minute*, that they must be home by *noontime* in order to eat lunch with the family, and that their favorite cartoon show won't be aired on television until *four o'clock*.

Children who are mature enough to watch CARRASCOLENDAS with interest can probably be taught the rudiments of "telling time" once they have learned to count. In many cases they have already associated the movement of the clock with passing events, and can use some of the vocabulary associated with time, like *clock*, *hour*, *slow*, and *bedtime*. But children do not generally develop a real "feel" for time until they are ten years of age or older.

"The Late Lion" shows children two concepts of time: what the hour looks like on a clock and the importance of remembering when events will take place. The understanding throughout the program is that children will make mistakes while learning to tell time or while developing a comprehension of it ("The Minute Song"). Caracoles is going to dedicate his new restaurant and asks Agapito to spread the word. Agapito, however, tries to remember the time the restaurant will open by the "feel" of his paws set as the hands of a clock, instead of merely remembering when the event will occur. Naturally, he gets things confused, and everyone shows up at different times. Furthermore, Agapito is seen *wasting time*, *spending too much time* on unimportant matters, and *losing time*. Time has led him to make a series of mistakes. Agapito admits them and is cheerfully forgiven by his companions. Everyone makes mistakes, it is realized, especially when it comes to telling time. "You can't learn everything at once. It takes time."

ACTIVITY CORNER

One can have a lot of fun talking to children about time. Ask them to imagine what would happen if suddenly all the clocks and watches in the world were to stop running and couldn't be started again. What could they use to tell time — the sun and the shadows, an hourglass, a calendar? You might also ask them if they know when important events at school or around the house usually take place.

It is important that children be given opportunities to regulate some of their activities by the clock, such as moving from one activity center to another by themselves at a specified time. However, it is even more important for them to learn to organize and plan their time. You might have a "free hour" or a "free afternoon" for the children in your class. Have them plan how they will use their time. Afterwards, have the children evaluate what they did. Did anyone waste their time? Discuss the latter with the children. Does sitting around doing nothing necessarily mean a waste of time? Differentiate between time wasted and time well spent.

Minute and *second* are many times meaningless concepts for many children. Schedule a series of activities (closing their eyes, jumping, listening to music, etc.), each, for one minute. Once the children have a concept of this time measurement, it is easier for them to understand greater measurements.

Everybody Makes Mistakes — Show #403

Many children are sometimes intolerant of their own and others' mistakes. Other children are afraid of mistakes for fear of failure or loss of approval. They need to understand several things about the process of learning.

First, mistakes happen. When mistakes are made, children must deal with them directly and constructively. They must learn from their own mistakes and from those which others make. Blaming themselves or others or using words like "dumb" or "stupid" to describe people's errors is not only unproductive but also unrealistic, because "Everybody Makes Mistakes."

A second and related point is that mistakes can lead to other mistakes if we let them. Your children can probably recall times when they became so flustered over a mistake or an accident that other mistakes were made in quick succession.

Mistakes should not discourage us from trying or cause us to lose confidence in ourselves or others. Sometimes it's not possible to correct a mistake (as when playing sports or certain games, like checkers), in which case it's better for us to go ahead and do the best we can until we complete the task, and try to avoid similar mistakes in the future.

Finally, some mistakes are made when we *do* something, others when we *fail to do* something we should have done. Still other kinds of mistakes are made as a result of our not listening to others attentively.

"Everybody Makes Mistakes" depicts a whole series of mistakes made as a result of two events: Uncle Andy's need for more shelves and the hectic preparations for the local talent show. The theme is presented in a comical way to help children understand how to deal constructively with their own mistakes and understand those which others make.

ACTIVITY CORNER

Encourage the children in your class to talk about how they feel when they make mistakes. What are their reactions to someone else's mistakes? It is important for children not to be afraid of making mistakes. One of the ways the children can lose this fear is by having teachers and parents admit that they make mistakes. Many times a child is afraid failure will mean disapproval. Ask your class, "Has your teacher ever made a mistake?" "Have any of your friends ever made a mistake?" "What did you do or say about it?" "Has your mother or father ever made a mistake?" All of these should be discussed in a straightforward way with emphasis on what was learned or what should have been learned.

The next time you read a story to a reading group in class, give the children opportunities to identify some of the mistakes made by the characters in the plot and ask how these mistakes were resolved.

Be alert to how individual children handle mistakes or accidents. If one becomes anxious or angry as a result, take time to help him/her work the mistake through. One of the best ways is getting the child to stop and think of what can be done to straighten out the situation as well as possible. Then, help the child think of a *real* alternative for the next time. Responses such as "I won't do it again" or "I'll try something else" usually mean that the child has not yet thought of how to profit from the mistake or is still too upset to talk about it. Proceed patiently, offer suggestions only if it's absolutely necessary, and try to have the child come up with a resolution on his/her own whenever possible and an acceptance of his error. If there is an opportunity for the child to practice or try out another idea, so much the better.

What's Everybody Afraid Of — Show #404

Fear is a basic and problematic emotion. All animals display various types of startle reactions, and some of the larger or more familiar animals exhibit behaviors that humans recognize as genuine fear.

But unlike other creatures in the animal kingdom, humans can examine their fears and learn to deal with them. Some fears are useful; there are things that should be feared. Other fears are irrational; we may have acquired them as a result of a terrifying experience or we may not even know how our fear came about.

Our concern for others sometimes leads us to fear for them and to take care of them – a useful fear. An infant who is seen holding a kitchen knife will give rise to fear in us. If well handled, the child will learn not to handle knives or to handle them "with respect." But if this occasion is not treated well, the child could become terribly frightened and develop an irrational fear of knives, inhibiting or delaying his developing the necessary skills with knives at a later age or causing him to fear shiny metal objects in general – at least for a while.

Unfounded fears can be dispelled with experience, providing that the experiences themselves are not frightening.

Children must be allowed to take some risks – emotional and physical – if they are to grow up, and parents and teachers must distinguish the genuinely dangerous objects or situations from those which a youngster can manage.

"What's Everybody Afraid Of?" deals with ghosts and "shadowy things" in a suspenseful series of events which begins with Campamocha reading a ghost story during a storm and ending with everyone in CARRASCOLENDAS inadvertently scaring each other. The dialogue, however, carries the real message: Everyone fears something. Since fears are either useful or unfounded, what do we have to fear?

ACTIVITY CORNER

Ask the children in your class to discuss among themselves or with you some of the things that frighten them. Have them begin by naming or describing their fears. Do your part also; tell them some of the things that frighten you and some of the things that *they* do which makes you fear for

them. Encourage everyone to talk. Try to identify unfounded fears, but don't ridicule them or press the children to change their emotions. Point out to them some things that have to be done with caution (such as riding a bicycle or swimming) instead of being avoided or feared.

Have the children recount a scary fictional story. Then read them a newspaper story about a mishap which occurred to a child. Ask them what makes the stories different. Do the two stories tell us about different kinds of fears?

The most complex kind of fear is that which people have of one another. Many fear people who are of a different ethnic race. Encourage the children to express any present fears of other people. Are there any children in school they are afraid of? Any teachers?

Town Circus — Show #405

Berta and the children are saying, "Wouldn't it be great to have a circus come to Carrascolendas?" Everyone agrees, but no circus is scheduled to come to the town. Instead, Mabel suggests, the people in Carrascolendas could conduct their very own circus with everyone taking a part.

There's lots of activity in Carrascolendas. Everyone is practicing an act . . . except Campamocha. He would like to be a clown, but he's convinced that the only thing he can do is fix things. Tío Cheo convinces Campamocha to try, but his failures soon discourage him.

Not everything that is worth doing is easy to master. In fact, the things we most enjoy doing very often involve persistence, making mistakes, and learning by trial and error. The important thing is not to become discouraged.

Friends can help us learn to do these things and can give us moral support during the tougher moments, especially when we are learning the basics. They will also appreciate having a friend with skills which contribute to everyone's well being or enjoyment.

ACTIVITY CORNER

Next time a circus or a circus movie comes to town or airs on television, encourage as many children as possible to see it. Discuss with them the many preparations which are necessary in order for the circus to be a success.

Encourage the children's spontaneous efforts to organize activities with their friends or classmates. Perhaps they could prepare some entertainment — a skit, a puppet show, a magic show — and "tour" the neighborhood or present it to persons who come to visit your school. If this activity

necessitates writing or costuming or making a few props, so much the better.

Discuss with the children the meaning of the word "talent." Perhaps some of the children in your class have a special talent they may wish to demonstrate.

Invite a local artist (dancer, musician, painter, etc.) to speak to your class. Have the artist discuss mistakes he made in learning, discouragements, skills that had to be learned, etc. Encourage the children to question the artist informally.

Chicago Machines — Show #406

Campamocha is a funny guy. Sometimes he pretends he's a machine. The trouble is, he likes all machines so much he can't make up his mind which he'd like to be. His friends want to help him, and Uncle Andy suggests that Campamocha and two of his friends, Dyana and Caracoles, visit Chicago where they can tour the Museum of Science and Industry. There are plenty of machines there for Campamocha to see.

"Chicago Machines" is one of several on-location programs for this year's CARRASCOLENDAS series. It utilizes the acting and dancing talents of a number of gifted Puerto Rican and Mexican American children, residents of the Chicago area.

Campamocha finds machines even more fascinating than he thought, but ultimately he realizes that machines are not as valuable as people. "You can invent a machine, but a machine cannot invent you."

There are many kinds of machines. The telephone is one, and so is an airplane. Machines, in fact, can range from simple ones to very complex ones that are built from many other machines, such as a car.

Machines expand mankind's ability to work and make it more efficient. Yet machines should be the servants of people, not only those who own the machines and make them run, but also the many who are influenced by them, the consumer public. The efficiency associated with a machine society (industrial society) should not cause it to be less human. Rather, with the application of imagination to technology, the needs of people and the need for efficiency can be met simultaneously.

ACTIVITY CORNER

How are tools different from machines? What is the difference, for example, between a hand mixer and an electric mixer, between a bicycle and a motorcycle?

How many machines can a child spot around his house? Have the children list them, and then see how many different ways the same ones can be classified. Encourage the children to think of unusual ways to classify them, such as their use in certain parts of the house, indoor machines and outdoor machines, heavy and light, portable and stationary, etc.

Many things are made by a combination of human craft and machine. Study the differences in such objects as clothes, jewelry, and furniture when they are made entirely by hand, when they are made by machine and finished by hand, or when they are made entirely by machine.

Agapito Chooses Trouble — Show #407

In this program Agapito feels a need to do something about his loneliness. With the aid of special effects and song, the program begins with Agapito thinking out loud to himself trying to puzzle out why he feels so sad so often. Berta hits upon the idea that what Agapito needs is a companion, a pet. Agapito is excited about the possibility, but it becomes clear that he has given little consideration to the choice of a companion or the responsibilities involved in having one. At the prompting of the children, he decides that what he really wants is a dog, and Mabel produces a cute puppy for him from her magic hat. But then the seemingly awesome tasks of naming, training, feeding, and caring for the dog begin to weigh heavily on him, and he names the puppy Trouble. Berta also likes Trouble, and Agapito seizes upon the opportunity to get rid of his "trouble" by giving the puppy to her. But then he starts to miss Trouble, realizes that he had come to love Trouble after all and that he wants him back. Now he's really in trouble – with a capital T.

All of us need to give and receive love. Companionship keeps us from being lonely and provides us an opportunity to give of ourselves. But companionship implies a two-way relationship, and we must accept

responsibilities toward companions, be they human friends or animal pets, if the relationship is to be an enduring and satisfying one. In fact, it is precisely by doing for others that we come to love and enjoy them in special ways. Sometimes our loneliness is not a general feeling, as when we experience a longing to be with a particular companion. In these cases we say that we "miss" someone.

ACTIVITY CORNER

Talk to your children about times when you've missed someone, and ask them to talk to one another about instances when they've missed a particular person very much or when they've missed a whole group of friends (such as classmates). What is the difference between being lonely and the need they sometimes have to be alone? Have they ever missed someone with whom they "fight" a lot, like a brother or a sister? How can that be?

If your children have companion pets at home or class pets at school, how do they take care of them? Sometimes it's good to organize and schedule care-taking activities, such as feeding the hamster at regular hours, to help the children remember their responsibilities toward their pets and to enjoy them more.

Besides being responsible for others, people must also be responsible for the care and treatment of objects. Discuss the meaning of responsibility. How does this apply to the classroom? What are the specific responsibilities each child has at home? What are the responsib lities of their parents?

What Size is Caracoles — Show #408

Caracoles has received an invitation to his cousin's wedding. But he has no suit to wear, and he has just spent his savings to buy a refrigerator for his restaurant. Agapito, Uncle Andy, and the children of Carrascolendas decide to surprise Caracoles by taking up a collection and buying him a suit from a mail order catalog. When the suit arrives, however, they discover that it's too big. Perhaps they could fatten Caracoles up a bit . . .

One of the most important applications of mathematics is measurement. Measurement in one form or another so affects our lives everyday that we sometimes overlook its importance. Could we cook or type or sew without measurements? Could industry produce the goods we consume without measurement? Would we know when the workday was over without measurement? Could a house or bridge be built without measurement?

Estimation of size and distance are skills which children need to develop. Some skills, like estimating the size of a dress or the distance between home and school, can be done informally and then checked for accuracy – just for fun. Other matters, like selecting a pair of shoes, require more precise

measurement from the start, because the consequences of a bad guess can be serious.

ACTIVITY CORNER

Show the children a ruler and have one of them estimate the width of a room. Teach them how to use the ruler so that they can check the estimation by actually measuring it. Then have another one estimate the length of the room. How high do they think the ceiling is?

How many different ways of measuring can they name? What would happen if no one had ever devised ways of counting or measuring? Can they explain to you some techniques of measurement that they've learned?

Exercise is especially important for children. It not only helps to develop young bodies but also aids in the development of coordination. Is there a physical fitness program in your school? Have the children in your class develop some exercise activities for themselves. If there is a film on olympic contests in your school library, show it to the children to stimulate their interest in physical fitness.

Children who are under or over developed many times suffer from ridicule by their classmates. If this occurs in your classroom, have the children discuss their feelings about this. Use dramatic activities to present situations of these types. Have the children discuss how it feels to be laughed at and what some reasons might be that people are cruel to others.

New Boy in Town — Show #409

There's a new boy in town, Pepe. He seems friendly enough, it's just that he can't understand why people in Carrascolendas do some of the things they do – why little kids get a break playing marbles or basketball, why Agapito (who has very big feet) doesn't lose his turn at hopscotch when he steps on a line. Pepe wants to play exciting games like daredevil, which make people have to compete all the time or prove themselves over and over again. And some of his games are dangerous!

Strict competition is fair only when all the players are assumed to have about the same level of ability. When a person is first learning a new sport, however, one must be patient in teaching or exemplifying the rules and the physical movements required. Also, younger children playing with older ones may need an occasional break just to keep their interest alive. There is a legitimate place for cooperation in competitive sports, and the rules of the game are designed to keep competition from going "out of bounds," as well as to help determine the winner.

All kids at one time or another have been dared to do something. "New Boy in Town" illustrates that sometimes it takes more courage to say no to a dare than to do it. Each child has to evaluate the risk for himself or herself. Besides, our real friends don't require us to "prove something" to them all the time. While it is important to care for others, it is also important to care for ourselves.

ACTIVITY CORNER

How do the children in your class make a new classmate — or a substitute teacher, for that matter, — feel at home? Have them articulate how they come to know the recent arrival, what they would do differently if the person were a boy or a girl. Would they act differently if the person were tall or short, a good athlete or not, outgoing or shy? What if the person were from another ethnic group or had recently come from a Spanish-speaking country like Mexico and could speak no English? Try to pursue the questions which seem to educe genuine interest *or* which educe "nervous" or stereotypic responses from your students.

Can the pupils name some of the things they've done for their younger brothers or sisters or neighborhood friends to help them learn a new game? Can they recall instances when older children have helped them succeed? Were these favors fair?

Teach the Teacher — Show #410

Young children often hold teachers in awe. Some children have so much respect for their teacher's vast knowledge that they forget that they are human beings who are themselves constantly learning . . . and not by books alone. Children don't always realize that less educated but highly experienced people are also storehouses of knowledge — and of wisdom. The historical roots of formal education, after all, date back to the times when "education" was a family affair and when instruction in the treasured elements of the group's way of life was entrusted to certain respected members of the society — long before there were any books.

In "Teach the Teacher," Miss Hernandez has decided to prepare a banquet of Mexican food for all her friends in Carrascolendas, in spite of the fact that in the past she has only cooked for herself. Caracoles, who owns the restaurant, offers to help her prepare the main dish, chicken *mole*, but she is determined not to impose upon anyone. She will learn how to cook this dish by reading a number of cookbooks, she announces.

Well . . . the result is the most beautiful mess ever witnessed on television. But Caracoles saves the day and Miss Hernandez learns a lesson in learning from her friends.

Books and other written materials serve us daily in our work and in our pastimes. They tell us how to do things . . . how to cook a new dish, assemble a bicycle, or compute a client's income tax. But instructional materials or directions presume that the reader has some knowledge and experience already, and this is best acquired by direct instruction.

ACTIVITY CORNER

Ask the children to name some skills that can be best learned through personal experience. Ask them to name some skills that can best be learned through formal instruction and by reading books. What about art or writing — how are these best learned? What kinds of things are best learned by a combination of both formal instruction and experience?

Ask the children to discuss the things their family members can do and could teach one another. The children might want to share a lesson learned from a family member.

In discussing past things learned and things yet to be learned, the children might make a poster or booklet in 3 sections: things they have learned since birth (walking, talking, etc.), things they are currently learning and things they hope to learn.

While formal education facilitates learning and makes it efficient, most of our learning takes place outside of school in the informal and often spontaneous settings of real life. Because of this, we must be alert to learning opportunities from all sources, from all people.

That Left Out Feeling — Show #411

A surprise party is being planned for Caracoles, and he can't figure out why he has not been included in the activity going on all around him. In fact, it appears that people are plotting to leave him out!

We feel left out when our friends or loved ones do things and exclude us from participation. This is a disturbing feeling, for it can cause us to doubt

our self-worth or the relationship which we have with people who matter in our lives.

Sometimes, however, we are excluded for a good cause. Whenever we feel left out, we should first try to determine if there is a reason for it. In other words, we should first try to see things from a friend's point of view. A child, for example, might be left out of a game because he or she might not be big enough to play with older children.

A left out feeling can be depressing. For this reason it is important to seek out activities where we can "belong," where our contributions are recognized and are personally satisfying. Helping others frequently helps us to resolve our left out feelings.

It is important that we plan to do some things in which everyone can have a part — old and young, big and small, male and female. Any group — a class at school, neighborhood friends, or a family — cannot remain strong if its members don't do things together.

ACTIVITY CORNER

Ask the children about instances in which they felt left out of a school or classroom activity. If the feeling was in reality unfounded, explain the situation and ask what she or he would have done in making the decision. However, if a child was really left out, admit it and discuss with the students your plans to do things differently in the future.

Should you ever notice the children leaving someone out of an important activity, ask them to take note of it and to see if the exclusion is justified. If it is — and it might be — ask them to take steps to prevent the excluded person from being hurt. Perhaps a later activity could be built around the one excluded, for instance.

When a child gets that left out feeling, don't let him or her "stew" too long. Sympathize with and counsel the child, but get the youngster active again — thinking about reasons why she or he was left out, doing something which she or he really enjoys, finding another thing to do with or for some other friends. There is no reason, after all, why a child must *stay* left out.

Miami Baseball **Show #412**

The men of Carrascolendas are excited about the new baseball team they've organized and decide to visit Miami to learn the fine points of the game from the baseball pros there. The program shows them on location undergoing the rigors of training, acquiring teamwork, and, even more important, learning how to communicate with one another in spite of their cultural, linguistic, and dialectical differences.

Teamwork, such as that required for competitive sports, depends upon the skills and cooperation of every member of the team. To be a good team player, one must learn not only the technical skills involved, but also the interpersonal skills of communicating and getting along with others and of doing one's part in the total effort. Viewed in this light, team sports can have a character building value in addition to their recreational value.

In mapping out an effective team strategy, every individual must be taken into account so that the team will have more "strengths" and fewer "weaknesses" than any one player alone could possess. This is also the case in real life whenever a cooperative project is undertaken. Cultural stereotypes, for instance, because they prevent us from viewing individual persons as they really are, can only hinder social teamwork.

ACTIVITY CORNER

The next time you notice the children involved in planning a group activity, however informally, ask them how it was that they reached decisions about what certain children would do. Why did a certain boy or girl agree to undertake a particular task instead of another one? Who came up with the idea in the first place? Who provided the leadership in organizing the effort? Did everyone do his or her part? Who did the most work? Why were some motivated and others not?

Perhaps in this way your children will become more conscious of what happens in the spontaneous and formal activities which make up so much of their lives in and out of school, as well as becoming sensitive to the need for careful analysis of what needs to be done and who should do it.

Agapito Wants A Job — Show #413

Pepper is preparing a book: ¿Quién to Hace? (Who does What) featuring the people who do different jobs in Carrascolendas. Agapito sees Pepper taking pictures of everyone else and wonders why she hasn't taken one of him. "Because you don't have a job," he is told. So Agapito discusses different job possibilities and has to reject them for various reasons until several people who need temporary help happen to ask him if he would do an occasional odd job for them. Agapito then becomes the Odd-Jobs Lion of Carrascolendas, and Pepper takes his picture for her book.

All people – young and old alike – need to be engaged in constructive work appropriate to their maturity, skills, and interests. In this way they contribute to the general well being of others, develop realistic feelings of importance, and contribute to their own fulfillment. Every job, every station in life, is important to society, and children need to understand that the things in their environment which they often take for granted actually involve many people and provide their livelihood.

Children don't always know just what it is their parents *really* do, although they might be able to name their father's or mother's occupation. Children's rough ideas of what being an adult worker really means can begin at home and at school. What does being a housewife or a working mother mean to family life? Do they realize that many of their female teachers are working mothers, too? How is it that people earn money working?

ACTIVITY CORNER

Take your children to the places where some of their relatives work, especially those places in the school neighborhood. Show them the kinds of things or services which the various kinds of work produce and explain to them the importance of the jobs to society and to making a living.

Children also can be involved in contributing to the class' well being, each according to her or his abilities. They actually need to have work assigned to them – even odd jobs – if they are to feel part of the class team. You might ask them what in particular each one would like to do, and you can begin by "volunteering" to take care of some of the things yourself. If each member of the class takes charge of something, you may be free to do some things of greater benefit to the students, such as engaging in more individual instruction. Be sure to recognize their contributions.

Start an occupational file or book collection in the library corner of your classroom. The school librarian can help you select some age-appropriate materials and rotate them periodically.

A Brand New Me

Show #414

Tio Cheo receives a letter from his cousin Tato, who lives in Puerto Rico, inquiring about Carrascolendas. Tio Cheo and the children decide to tell Tato a "good story," detailing the marvels of the "metropolis" and giving fantastic accounts about its inhabitants – all in good fun.

But Tato is a simple man who loves to dream about far-away places. When he reads Tio Cheo's return letter he becomes so intrigued with this fictional Carrascolendas that he is compelled to make a visit so that he can write about its fabulous people.

To keep Tio Cheo from suffering the consequences of his practical joke, everyone decides to fake it, to become the sort of people depicted in his letter and impress Tato when he arrives.

There are times when, for one reason or another, we are not satisfied with what we are and decide to change some aspect of our personality. But trying to remake ourselves all at once in order to impress an important person or to act in a way which we *presume* is expected of us is something else again.

It is not our trappings (manner of speaking, clothes, or other possessions) which make us worthwhile human beings but the kind of people we are, the virtues we command, and the humanness we display. In this way, everyone is important even though they may not be publicly recognized or socially prominent.

ACTIVITY CORNER

How do the children in your class perceive important people? Do certain people who they do not rate as important also possess some of these traits? Could it be that *importance* is sometimes confused with *prominence* or *power?* What special obligations do prominent and powerful people have toward others or to the community or society in general?

In a group sharing session, have the children (1) discuss several ways that family members help each other to be happy; (2) identify and discuss events and situations that make people feel important; (3) examine reasons why people need to feel important; and (4) propose reasons why it is better to behave naturally — to be one's self.

Have the children write a letter to a pen pal, friend or relative describing himself and his surroundings.

Tie your discussions to the theme of the show "Does Somebody Special Live Here."

Part of your children's character formation depends upon their thinking through many issues in considerable detail. "A Brand New Me" is the kind of program that naturally leads them to think seriously about their values and gives you a good opportunity to influence their attitudes.

Have the class discuss their observations and experiences of "putting on airs" to impress someone.

Berta and Dyana love all of the people in Carrascolendas but find that they can't play with them or be with them all of the time, since everyone has things to do. Wouldn't it be nice, they say to one another, if all of the people in Carrascolendas were toys they could play with whenever they wanted?

Mabel casts Berta and Dyana into a toy dream so that they can imagine what such a situation would be like, and they discover that toys are no substitute for real people, even though they are a lot of fun.

Toys permit children to develop their imaginations and to try out ideas without the risk of hurting anyone. Some toys, such as alphabet blocks, are educational, and others, like balls, help us develop our bodies. Soft animal toys or dolls, however, are the ones which children come to love.

Occasionally children turn to toys not to play with and "pretend" but to take the place of personal contact with people. Whenever children do this, there is reason to suspect that they are not happy with their relationships with others. Frustration has caused them to retreat into a fantasy where they can control life's events.

But toys, however sophisticated or attractive, cannot give them real attention or affection. Children can only imagine that toys love them in return. Toys are "plastic," not natural or real. They can't even frustrate us of their own choosing; they can only break down.

ACTIVITY CORNER

Ask the children to identify their favorite toys and to tell you why they like them so. How are humans different from dolls or stuffed animals? How are toys different from pets? Would they rather have a doll, a pet, or a human for a friend? Why? What responsibilities do the children have toward their toys and pets? How do these differ? Are these similar to those inside the family?

Do you as an important adult in the children's lives prefer people to things? Have the children in your class discuss how concern for others can be demonstrated around their school or in their classroom.

Have the children gather scrap materials for school or classroom center where toys can be designed and built. Your class might want to make a list of needed items. Help them enumerate the household items that can be used to design and make toys, such as spools, cloth, buttons, boxes, macaroni, old shoes and sox, cans, seed pods, string, yarn, etc.

Have the children make designs and patterns for toys they would like to make and take home. Perhaps, they would want to share some of the toys they could make with brothers and sisters or other children in the community.

Time On My Hands

Show #416

Uncle Andy has been so busy working that he doesn't have time for play or for recreation of any sort. The people of Carrascolendas become so concerned over his long, busy hours of work that they decide to "help" him by not taking any more shoes to him to be repaired. The result, however, is not what they expected, an Uncle Andy with time to play. Instead, Uncle Andy becomes a little despondent. He would like to play but he can't seem to get enthusiastic about having a good time.

The root of the word "recreation" is to re-create, and it means to make one's self fit to face work and living with a good attitude. Recreation gives us a chance to enjoy ourselves through activities which normally have little or no consequence on our livelihood or obligations. Recreation may be done in a group setting or by ourselves, and it may or may not involve a lot of physical activity. Compare bowling, checkers, stamp collecting, and horse-back riding. One person's recreation (for example, playing a musical instrument) can be another person's work.

There is a big difference between recreation and wasting time. Recreation is a constructive activity. In fact, if we have no obligations (earning a living, studying, keeping house) recreation loses its meaning. Work and play need to be balanced in everyone's life.

ACTIVITY CORNER

Ask your children to state in their own words what *balance* means. Things can be balanced on a scale — but how can *activities* be balanced? What does a *balanced diet* mean?

Have the children plan a schedule of their evenings or weekends. Is there a plan for helping or working with other family members or does it consist almost exclusively of play activities?

Ask the children to think about the balance of work and play at school. Can so-called work also be fun to do? How can they help create a pleasant atmosphere for learning? What can they do to get more fun out of recess or other unstructured time during school?

Homesickness — Show #417

Agapito has been restless and disheartened lately, but nobody can figure out why. Pepper solves the mystery: Agapito is homesick for the wilds. But Agapito also likes Carrascolendas, and he leaves.

Whenever we miss the place we call home, we say we are homesick. We long to go back to enjoy some of the people and challenges which have had special meaning for us. Homesickness means that for the present we are living a life much different from the one we were accustomed to. A certain amount of adjustment is called for, and we are having a bit of difficulty making it.

Sometimes, when we have moved to different places in the course of our lives, we may have several homes and we can become homesick for more than one place.

Your children have undoubtedly experienced homesickness or know friends who have. Homesickness that cannot be handled by our returning home or contacting friends there is best resolved by activity with friends who are nearby or by doing something which reminds us of what we did back home.

ACTIVITY CORNER

Discuss with the children several ways they can help others who become homesick. Have them recount instances of homesickness, their relief when they came home or when the feeling abated, and what they believe causes people to get homesick. How long do you have to be away from home to become homesick? Would they become more homesick if they were traveling with their family or if they were traveling with friends? Suppose they had gone someplace far away from home and weren't going to return for some time; what could they do themselves to help get over their homesickness?

New Dresses From New York — Show #418

Dyana and Berta, Carrascolendas' real live dolls, are seeking to make themselves some stylish new dresses, but without much success. They accidentally fall into a box full of toys that were shipped incorrectly to Tio Cheo and which he is returning to New York. The next thing, they find themselves in the City. Some New York children guide them around. They visit a toy factory and a clothes factory, but none of the dresses they find there fit them quite right. One of the children hits upon the idea of having a *costurera* (dress maker) make them some special clothes, just right for each of them. They are very happy with the results and return with the right shipment of toys for Tio Cheo to Carrascolendas, where they recount their adventures.

Children very often don't realize how complex the world of work can be or how many people doing different jobs are necessary to produce the toys they play with or the clothes they wear.

Factories produce goods in an efficient manner, with everyone doing a job which is only part of the whole job. Machines also help them do their work quickly. The result is a product which is relatively inexpensive but which is very much like every other product.

By way of contrast, some things are made by one person alone or by only a few people working together who do most of the work by hand. Jobs such as these are called crafts. Crafts produce more elegant but more expensive products. The value of buying a product produced by a craftsman or craftswoman is that it is unique, that every product is a little different from every other one. Some crafts have been maintained in the same family for generations.

Adults and children both enjoy owning objects which are distinctive, which let them affirm their individuality in a group and which express their good taste. Some of these things can be bought, of course, and others children can learn to make for themselves. Even objects that can be assembled (such as a kit for a terrarium) can be given a distinctive touch. Hobbies, too, can be used for this purpose and can produce objects worthy of keeping or of giving to others as presents.

ACTIVITY CORNER

Encourage the children to engage in creative and imaginative work. Better yet, devote some class time to various crafts. You may wish to consult a supervisor in the area of arts and crafts or a book on children's crafts for the elementary school.

Discuss with the students how the work which interests them relates to people's wants and needs, how many different kinds of tasks are involved in each job or occupation, and what kind of training is required. Then explain how experience will help each of them do the job even better and how other opportunities (such as managing other workers or teaching the job to less experienced people) might eventually occur. In this way, the idea of a career will gradually be made clear to the students as they grow older.

Get The Message? — Show #419

Tio Cheo has just returned from the dentist and can't open his mouth to talk. Campamocha and Caracoles speculate about how important speech is to communication and wind up betting that the other can't go for long without speaking. To meet their communication needs in the meantime,

Campamocha will use signaling flags, while Caracoles will use body language. Soon everybody gets into the act except Mabel.

Mabel is in desperate straits. She needs someone to help her prepare a speech in Spanish, a speech she is going to deliver to a group of visiting magicians from Mexico the following day. Miss Hernandez is not home, and the other Spanish speakers won't speak to her. In desperation she tries to cast a spell on herself which will make her instantly bilingual, but the trick backfires and she winds up speaking neither English nor Spanish but Op.

"Get the Message?" portrays the many forms which communication can take. Basically, however, these forms depend on the spoken word for their content and meaning.

Persons who are bilingual can use these various communication modes in two languages, and can enjoy a wide range of expression with a broader circle of acquaintances. Posture, certain touches or hugs, sign language, picture writing, drum beats, certain whistles or noises or grunts — each may be different for different languages, but they all help another person to understand, they all help communication.

ACTIVITY CORNER

Have your children list a number of ways in which communication takes place. Then classify these in different ways: 1) Which of these are more or less sufficient by themselves; which only help communication? 2) Which can be used only in person? 3) Which can be used to communicate at a distance? 4) Which can preserve a communication for someone at a later time? 5) Which could they use to communicate to someone who does not speak a language they know? As these questions are presented, you can bet the original list will grow.

Perhaps the children would like to pursue a communication activity that holds some fascination for them. Can they mime a short play using only sounds or gestures but no words? Can they send short messages in Morse Code? Have them communicate feelings to each other without using language. Being sensitive to others' body language is important to people living and working together. Such activities will serve to have them appreciate various communication modes and build their ability to pay close attention.

My Favorite Sound — Show #420

Pepper is conducting an investigation: She wants to find out what everybody's favorite sound is. She elicits the help of Agapito to interview the residents of Carrascolendas, and everyone discovers new meanings to sounds they have always taken for granted but that others have appreciated in unique ways.

There are many sounds in our environment which bombard our sense of hearing. Fortunately, we learn to "filter out" most of these sounds and attend only to those which have special meaning for us.

But sounds can be a source of entertainment, and each of us — children especially — need to learn to appreciate them. Sounds, for example, can be classified in many ways and have different meanings to different people.

Did you realize that certain sounds in our language which mimic natural sounds (such as the crowing of a rooster or the purring of a kitten or the ringing of a bell) are given different expressions in different languages?

ACTIVITY CORNER

What are your children's favorite sounds? What do these sounds *mean* to them? Does the sound of a bedtime story signify only the onset of sleep, or does this mean love and affection to your youngsters? What does a telephone ring signify besides an urgency to pick up the receiver?

Can your children think of some sounds that signify *power? danger? history? emotion?* What do they associate with the sounds of traffic? What "sound effects" do they make when they play games that require lots of pretending? What sound effects can boys make? can girls make? Do boys and girls prefer different sounds? Perhaps boys could explain some of their favorite sounds to the girls and vice versa.

Have your children close their eyes for a short while and listen to the sounds of the schoolroom or the sounds outside. What do they hear? What do the sounds mean to them? Which sounds are caused by people, which by nature?

Together And Alone **Show #421**

Today Dyana is not her usual friendly self. She is pensive. Everyone else in town is getting ready to paint a part of a big mural on Agapito's wall, but she would rather be alone. Berta persists in trying to involve her and to cheer her up, but to no avail.

There are times when everyone feels a need to be alone, to do "nothing." Actually, a person in this state is quite actively engaged in reflective

thinking, in spite of the outward appearance of inactivity or aimlessness. Reflective thinking is usually engaged in when we have to "sort out" something about ourselves, when we need to make adjustments. Thus reflective thinking helps us to know ourselves better and to resolve our problems.

People also need to be with others, to enjoy a sense of belonging and to be involved in group activities. We must respect both needs and be understanding of someone's need for solitude, since good adjustment is basic to good interpersonal relationsips.

ACTIVITY CORNER

Ask your children to recall instances when they felt a need to be alone. Are there any common elements in their stories? Have them suppose that they are at school and feel a need to be alone; how would they communicate this need without hurting any of their classmates feelings? Do you as a teacher understand this need? Can they detect when someone needs to be alone for awhile?

Puerto Rico Fishing Dream — Show #422

Campamocha loves to fish (although, alas, he is a poor fisherman) and Dyana loves to play with machines. They dream of what it would be like to change their lives: he, a fisherman in Puerto Rico; she, the owner of a fix-it shop.

Their dreams, however, convince them that they are better off doing what they know best.

Some film footage of Puerto Rico shows seagoing families working together in the fishing industry.

Play and hobbies serve children and adults in different ways. Recreation is important to both age groups, but adults need pastimes and opportunities to

express themselves in ways which their everyday work does not permit. Hence, certain forms of recreation are called avocations.

Young children very often play at what adults do for a living. For them, dreaming and pretending and their fleeting interests let them try various adult roles on for size, as it were, and help them develop their imaginations while expanding their knowledge base in preparation for important life decisions during adolescence and young adulthood. When a child pursues an activity – be it stamp collecting or chess or tennis or astronomy – with some intensity it means that the child is giving the matter serious consideration as a life work or as an avocation or as an important means of self expression now and in the future. As children get older, they will start choosing activities more in line with the general interests and abilities that they've developed in earlier years.

ACTIVITY CORNER

What are some of the "favorite" things the children like to do? Which of these seem to occur with more regularity? You can have a central influence in their lives by watching their interests and helping them understand more about these matters. Elementary books on the subject are a handy source, especially if the child can read fairly well, although more highly illustrated materials about different occupations should be available in the classroom or at the library for children who read very little or not at all.

Encourage the children to explain their interests to you. What are some of the things one might like about becoming a druggist? – its chemistry? Helping make people feel well again? The variety of things a pharmacist does? What is it about baseball that another likes – the activity, the competition and the teamwork, the feel of the bat hitting the ball? If you happen to know something about the activity, share your knowledge when the opportunity arises. If the matter seems especially important to a particular child, choose a quiet moment when you can spend more time in conversation. Since this child's interest is already established, he or she will appreciate the chance to talk.

Plan a field trip for your classroom in which children can observe and identify different job skills and describe how the workers cooperate to make their effort successful.

Puerto Rican and other Spanish speaking children will particularly enjoy the film visit to Puerto Rico. Expand on this base by further acquainting the children with Puerto Rico and establishing the importance of Puerto Rican people as part of the many different cultures of the U.S. You may want to delve into deeper study of Puerto Rico and its people.

Pepper has been investigating a peculiar phenomenon: Everyone in Carrascolendas learns from everyone else! They learn simple things and complex things, they learn fun things and practical things. And although each person learns differently, each learns . . . and each has something to teach to someone else.

When people learn something, they are in a position to teach it to someone else. Furthermore, since everyone's experiences are unique, it is possible to share our knowledge with others, even those who already know something about the subject. It is in this sharing of experiences that a "learning circle" is established.

One way of motivating children to learn is to give them opportunities to teach. The important element here is not the formality or informality of the occasion but the respect accorded to persons – whatever their age – for their knowledge.

Children who have been steeped in diverse cultures also know many things worth sharing, including stories and games. Some children's games and songs belong properly to what has recently been named "children's folklore," aspects of the culture that children enjoy almost exclusively and which are transmitted across generations not by adults, but by older children. The playground, during unstructured activities, is frequently where these activities make themselves manifest.

ACTIVITY CORNER

Some of the children in your class are experts on some things, things you may not even know about. In fact, one or two of them may be able to do some things better than you can.

Discover some of these strengths of knowledge or skill, and have the youngsters teach you about them. The possibilities are many. The trick is to select a topic or activity known by the child that holds some interest for you so that you can pursue it together or refer to it at a later time. You may also want to encourage the children to teach each other.

Do the children from the several ethnic cultures in your classroom or school know any games or songs that may properly be labeled "children's folklore?" If so, plan to have a series of cultural sharing experiences which will simultaneously enrich the recreational opportunities of the children and promote intercultural understanding.

While helping Campamocha clean out his fix-it shop, one of the children discovers an old hammer. Although it is "just an old hammer" to the children, it has a special meaning to Campamocha, who explains that it belonged to his great, great, great, great grandfather who was a blacksmith in the old Mexican town of San Antonio de Bexar. The children are intrigued by the insight that San Antonio – and all of Texas and the Southwest, for that matter – was once a part of Mexico. With the aid of Mabel's magic, the children and Campamocha travel through time and space back to old San Antonio.

The history of Mexican Americans in what is now the American Southwest dates back a long time. Some Spanish towns were established in the area before the British established settlements along the eastern coast of North America. Many Mexican Americans, of course, are first or second generation Americans, having come to the United States relatively recently from Mexico. But the majority of Mexican American families can trace their family history as American citizens for many generations. Many Mexican Americans are descendants of families who settled in the area before these states became part of the Union.

The "Ballad of Texas" shows a certain cultural continuity across time, as well as social change. Campamocha is not a blacksmith in Carrascolendas but the owner of a fix-it shop. Corn tortillas are now only rarely made by hand but are machine made and store bought. And many Spanish words have been incorporated into the English language.

ACTIVITY CORNER

Can your child recall any words in English which have been "borrowed" from Spanish?

Buy a tortilla mix at the supermarket and try making some tortillas by hand with your child, patting the balls of dough into a round, flat shape. Compare the size, shape, and taste of home-made tortillas with factory made ones. Does your youngster see any advantages to making tortillas by hand?

Although most children think of the past as being totally different from the present, many things do not change. Have the children discuss things in the film which are still the same. The game "A la rueda de San Miguel" is still played by children all over the Spanish speaking world. Have the children compare modes of transportation between then and now.

A merienda is a custom still kept by many Spanish-speaking families. It is an afternoon snack usually consisting of chocolate and sweet bread. Have a merienda in your class.

A la rueda de San Miguel

A la rueda rueda de San Miguel San Miguel
Todos traen su caja de miel
A lo maduro, a lo maduro
Que se volteé (child's name) de burro

The children hold hands as they walk around in a circle. One child is in the center. As each child's name is called by a child in the center, he turns and faces outward continuing to move in the circle. The last child left facing in then takes his place in the center of the circle. If there are Spanish-speaking children in your area, compare the versions of this game if it is played there.

Accent On Accents — Show #425

Tio Cheo is practicing English and Mabel is practicing Spanish. A series of hilarious mistakes in pronunciation result, which causes their friends to laugh and try to correct their mistakes all at once. The result is that Tio Cheo's and Mabel's feelings are hurt and they become discouraged from trying again.

The scenes depict how different cultural groups who speak the same language can have different words to refer to the same thing, how different languages express emotion with different sounds, (*ouch! ay!* for example), and portrays funny instances of language interference or confusion.

All of the world's major languages have dialects. Even within the United States, English and Spanish have dialects which can be located geographically and ethnically. As a result, people from the several ethnic groups who speak English or Spanish use different terms to mean the same thing or speak the language in a "peculiar" manner.

Needless to say, when one attempts to learn a second language one occasionally encounters what is called "linguistic interference," where the skills of speaking one's mother tongue cause confusion in the second language. The resultant mistakes are natural, and second language learners must accept the fact that all second language learners make these bloopers. By the same token, those already skilled in a person's second language need to be accepting of the person's mistakes and supportive of their sincere efforts.

ACTIVITY CORNER

Have the children listen for different Spanish accents on the Carrascolendas show: Cuban, Mexican-American, and Puerto Rican. Then have them listen to the different characters speak English. Why do different people speak in different ways? What do they think about that? Have they ever noticed that some children "pick up" an accent when they're around other kids who

speak differently? What does this tell them about the relationship between accents and personal relations?

Your students will have different levels of progressing in the use of English and Spanish for speaking, reading, or writing. Some of them could serve as good oral language models for their peers; for instance, you may wish to assign them some tutoring tasks.

Stop Thief! — Show #426

Agapito is decorating his den for a party. Almost everything is in readiness; he only needs a place for his flowers. Nothing quite works. In searching for something suitable around the town he spies a table in Ms. Hernandez' house. Although she is not at home, this does not deter him, and he "borrows" it anyway.

When Ms. Hernandez returns home she is puzzled over the table's disappearance. Campamocha's over-reaction to the missing table soon gets everyone believing that a crime-wave has come to Carrascolendas with the result that no one can come to Agapito's party for fear of being robbed.

We teach the children about honesty and respect for the property of others best by demonstrating these traits ourselves, both in our dealings with them and in our dealings with others.

Children don't usually plan to be dishonest or to steal things for personal gain. Curiosity and pleasure are frequently the real motives for actions which later get them into trouble. Often children are trapped by circumstances into not admitting to "dishonest" deeds, especially when adults attribute great evil to their intent or when the consequences are exaggerated unnecessarily. Lying about the deed only serves to complicate the matter and makes children yet more anxious about themselves.

An atmosphere of honesty, then, requires not only that children suffer the consequences of their mistakes but also that the consequences be justly evaluated and that self-esteem be maintained. Making up for a dishonest act is usually sufficient to teach the lesson.

ACTIVITY CORNER

Recall an instance in your childhood when you didn't follow the maxim, "Honesty is the best policy." Tell the story in all its "horrible" details to the children in your class. Chances are they'll enjoy it and learn from your experience. But don't turn this opportunity to have your children get to know you better into a "true confessions" time. It's enough that they know that you realize what such an embarrassing circumstance feels like.

Discuss the repercussions to over-reacting and jumping to conclusions. Use role playing activities in which this takes place. Have the children resolve situations that take investigation and careful thought.

Children learn to trust when they themselves are trusted. Be honest with the children in your class and discuss reasons why people lie with them.

Family Corner — Show #427

A part of Caracoles' restaurant is to be dedicated as the family corner, in recognition of the important part which families play in society. Uncle Andy suggests to Caracoles that a mural depicting family life be painted on the wall of the family corner. But here they're stymied. There are so many different kinds of families that they don't know how to portray a family which everyone will appreciate.

The family is sometimes referred to as the basic or fundamental social unit. Children – the adults of tomorrow – are taught the basics of social living in a family environment.

Families come in different forms and sizes. Families range from very small to very large. A family can be "nuclear" (parents and their children) or "extended" (including all the relatives), and may be either closely or loosely knit. Some families may have only one parent, and some may have an older brother or sister in charge. In fact, an organization, such as an orphanage, can be considered as a kind of family for some children.

But whatever the family structure may be, a family can be effective – it can be a good "place" for children to grow up and a source of love and support for all its members. Perhaps it is the feelings of mutuality and commitment which distinguish a "good" family atmosphere from an oppressive one. Such feelings can arise only when the members are called upon to assume responsibilities for one another's welfare.

ACTIVITY CORNER

Have the children name different families they know and analyze their structures: parents, children, other relatives living at home, etc. What does a

child think is required to make a happy family? What does a child most enjoy doing with his or her family?

Have a family day in your classroom. Encourage the children to bring pictures of their family members. Have them draw pictures of their families.

It's Not Wrong To Be Right — Show #428

Some of the people of Carrascolendas have been helping Ms. Hernandez clean her house. But the outside of her house, especially the water mill, also needs a little "sprucing up." Why not wash it down with lots of soap and water while everyone's got the chance?

No, No! says Mabel. If you wash down the mill, the pond may get polluted. A vote is taken and Mabel loses. You must be wrong, they say. But is she?

One of the hardest things for children and adults to do is to hold out against a majority, for a majority can bring a lot of pressure to bear on the nonconformist. Nevertheless, on matters of importance where the child is convinced of being right, standing up for that right is essential to moral development. While a majority may determine what the course of action should be and organize to get the job done, majority opinion cannot determine the rightness or wrongness of an action.

ACTIVITY CORNER

Is there a difference between being stubborn and being convinced? How can one tell the difference in others? in oneself? Is there a difference between having an *opinion* that something is not right and really *believing* that something is not right? Can we cooperate (or go along with) a majority opinion in the former case? What happens if we go along with the majority when we really believe that it's the *wrong* thing to do? Why do some children "give in" to their friends and do things they believe are wrong?

How should we respond when we are faced with opposition from someone who firmly believes we're wrong? Is a person who's convinced of being right always right?

What do we do later if we find out we've been wrong – if we've made a mistake? Suppose the person who was convinced of being right realizes later that she or he was wrong – what should the person do? Why is admitting we've made a mistake a courageous thing to do?

Campamocha's Lesson — Show #429

Everyone in Carrascolendas – everyone that is, except Campamocha – has an artistic hobby. Agapito plays a guitar, Miss Hernandez weaves, Berta likes to draw, and the children have organized an orchestra. Campamocha is impressed and decides to take up the accordion so that he can make music and express himself, too. But his first attempts are awful. So he decides to buy some records which will teach him to play better.

Campamocha's friends are eager to encourage him, so eager, in fact, that when they hear the recorded music coming from the fix-it shop they immediately rush to congratulate him on his progress in learning to play the instrument. Campamocha is too embarrassed to admit the truth.

However, when his friends plan to have him play some polka music at a dance, he's caught in a dilemma. Now he has to think up some excuses for not being able to play.

Artistic hobbies are a great source of enjoyment for us. But unlike hobbies which require less personal expression, artistic ones require the development of considerable skill before we can use "the basics" creatively for self-satisfaction and for the enjoyment of others. But the persistent hard work is worth it.

Consequently, children's artistic interests should be encouraged. The skills developed early in life may serve them well as they grow older.

ACTIVITY CORNER

Children learn much from other children. So if some of the children would like to play the piano or learn to draw better, expose them to a youngster who does these things well.

If the children have expressed interests in particular forms of art, take their lead and expose them to different artists in the medium they prefer. You might, for example, take them to see a junior ballet or a children's music

festival and have them meet and speak with some of the young artists. If a trip is not possible, perhaps the performer could come to school.

Adults who instruct children in the several art forms – persons like teachers of music or dance – are usually willing to spend time talking to kids about their specialties, and should not be overlooked as an important resource.

New Mexico Hands — Show #430

The people of Carrascolendas are having fun demonstrating to one another the things they can do with their hands. Tio Cheo tells them that the artesans and craftsmen of New Mexico, representatives of three American cultures, produce really wonderful things. Everyone decides to visit the historic town of Santa Fe, where the crafts of olden days have been preserved.

An important contribution to any society's culture is the maintenance of arts and crafts. Owning an object produced in the old style gives us more than pride of possession; it links us with history.

Engaging in arts and crafts is an excellent opportunity for self-expression and recreation, and helps develop finer control of our muscles and the coordination of thought and its tangible expression.

ACTIVITY CORNER

Have your children make something by hand to use or display. It can be anything, from a paper glider or a finger painting to a crafted belt or a wood carving. Keep these objects and encourage the children to make more like them, so that at a later time you can have them judge the progress of their developing skills.

Visit a museum and compare the different art and craft objects that different cultures produce.

Locate Santa Fe, New Mexico on a map. Discuss with the children how this area and its people differs from their own area and the people in their area. How are they similar?

I Want Everybody to Like Me — Show #431

Dyana has always been known for her vivacity and sense of fair play, not for her sweetness. One day when her companions turn her down in favor of Berta for the part of Princess Sweetie Pie in a play, she decides that she will change completely so that people will like her. Now she never raises her voice, never tags out a baseball player or hits a pitched ball, never disagrees with anyone, tries to help everyone even at her own great inconvenience and displeasure, and the like. What has happened to Dyana? No one is sure. They only know they liked the "old" Dyana better.

Everyone needs to have others like them. Everyone, furthermore, has room for self improvement, especially when it comes to dealing with others. But having said that, we must also admit our own humanity and our own peculiar limitations.

When we try to please others, or to change a disagreeable aspect of our personality, we must do so honestly and not for some ulterior motive. Efforts to deceive others into believing something about us will ultimately result in failure because we will not be motivated to keep up the charade forever. When we try to change ourselves we must first be convinced that the change is worthwhile and establish realistic ways of achieving that goal, because when we change something about ourselves other related habits are also modified. If, for example, we want to change our annoying habit of interrupting other persons, we may have also to learn to listen to them.

Nor should change violate our moral principles, the things we really believe in, because this will make us unhappy with ourselves. Some things are best left alone.

ACTIVITY CORNER

How can your children tell when people are not being themselves? Have any of them ever tried to impress someone or a group of friends? What happened? Has anyone ever tried to impress them? How did they feel?

How do children sometimes place unfair pressures on others to conform? Why do they think that children do this, anyway? What do they do when everyone else is doing something which they feel is not right?

Two Friendly Uncles — Show #432

Tio Cheo and Uncle Andy have a misunderstanding over a caricature of a shoe which Tio Cheo has drawn for the children. It is clear that although each respects the other, neither one really understands the other. They do different kinds of work, they prefer different dances, and they speak different languages. "I wish you would be more like me," each says to the other.

Mabel, who speaks English and is learning Spanish, and the children of Carrascolendas try to get Uncle Andy and Tio Cheo to see each other's point of view, but to no avail. The situation calls for drastic action! Mabel works her magic and Uncle Andy becomes a Spanish speaking toy maker while Tio Cheo turns into an English speaking shoe maker. After each has had to live in the other's shoes, they are ready to be themselves again and learn to appreciate their differences.

One of the greatest values of being a bilingual and bicultural person is to be able to understand and live in two distinct cultural environments . . . and enjoy both.

Different cultures have different ways of doing things. They have different tastes in music, art, and food and may even relate to people in different ways. At the root of it all, however, different peoples all have the same basic needs and wants and are simply trying to be happy human beings in a style that becomes them.

When misunderstandings over differences between people occur, it is basically because they do not really understand each other's ways because there has not been a joint effort to communicate. We tend to judge the behavior of others from our own perspectives, not from theirs.

Actually, each of us as individuals can learn much from the various cultures represented in our society. Whereas people in other countries have to travel the world to gain "broadening" experiences, citizens of the United States can have as friends people from a great variety of cultural groups.

Many schools, seeking to capitalize on these diverse cultural elements within our society, have been instituting cultural studies and bilingual programs in their curriculums.

ACTIVITY CORNER

Do the children appreciate some of these diverse cultural influences in their lives? The foods they eat, the songs they sing, the games they play — do they know where they've come from, or who invented them?

Notice how your children react to other children from different ethnic groups. If "communication" is not taking place, proceed with patience and contrive a way of getting the youngsters to meet (perhaps in a play setting or at a party) or to cooperate in doing something which is meaningful to them.

But your own example will be best. Have your children ever seen you personally involved with people who are "different," perhaps some of the parents of the children in class? Under what circumstances? Do you only meet the parents to discuss a "problem" or do you manage to involve them in more pleasant school activities as well?

Peeping Pepper — Show #433

Pepper's detective activities are getting out of hand. She has gone from solving mysteries with the clues she uncovers to trying to find out everything about everybody. As a result she jumps to some embarrassing conclusions and generally violates her friends' privacy.

Privacy has to do with maintaining our feelings, affects, and property inviolate. It means being able to keep things which are our business, our business.

As we get to know someone it is important that we learn some accurate information about them, enough to establish the kind of relationship we seek. But there is a difference between getting to know someone and prying into their lives. Prying occurs when we seek to obtain more information than is necessary for the particular kind of relationship or when we obtain information which is no longer relevant to the relationship, though it might have been at one time. Persons who have made mistakes and atoned for them, for example should not be judged by this irrelevant information and under most circumstances should have the right to keep this from us. Also, when we happen to obtain information about someone legitimately we must be judicious in communicating it, else we might violate a trust of privacy.

Finally, persons who violate our privacy indicate that they do not trust us or wish to use the information for their own purposes. In either case, we might feel intimidated, and no sound interpersonal relationship can develop here.

ACTIVITY CORNER

How does "Peeping Pepper" illustrate the maxim that "A little knowledge is a dangerous thing?" Would you want someone trying to find out *everything* about you? Why?

Ask your pupils how they handle information they obtain about others. Do they tell everybody else about it? What kinds of secrets do we best really keep?

What is a rumor? How can rumors deprive you of privacy?

Lost and Found — Show #434

Uncle Andy has a recurring nightmare about being lost. One night, after his screaming wakes up all of Carrascolendas, he determines that he'll never again go to sleep, and there starts a series of comic events whereby Uncle Andy tries to stay awake and everyone tries to get him to fall asleep under the guise of helping him to stay awake.

As Uncle Andy sleepily walks across the plaza he finds a child crying because she is lost. She has gotten separated from her older brother in the crowd. He stops to help her and while waiting for the child's brother to show up he gives her some important pointers about what to do about being lost. He knows what it is like, he says, and explains to the child about his own bad dreams.

All of us have bad dreams or nightmares occasionally, but it seems that children have them more often than adults, or perhaps they admit to them more often. Most adults have developed subtle skills in handling nightmares, such as reminding themselves that they're only dreaming. "Lost and Found" will help children understand that nightmares are "normal" and that they can learn to deal with them.

Children often have fears of becoming lost or, if they feel the least bit insecure, of being abandoned (although they don't admit the latter as frequently). They need to know how to cope with being lost, and must realize that the people they love will be looking for them just as soon as they are missed.

ACTIVITY CORNER

Review with the children their "identifying information:" address, phone number, etc. Ask them whom they would contact if they were lost; should they stop just anyone? What should they do if they got lost?

How can maps keep you from becoming lost or help you to get back to a familiar place? Draw a map in rough scale of the school and its environs and have the children try to locate the approximate location of certain rooms or areas in the school or have them label the streets around the school.

Discuss nightmares with the children. Encourage them to verbalize their bad dreams. Doing so will help you learn more about the children in your class.

TV or Not TV — Show #435

A TV production is coming to Carrascolendas, and Berta decides to use this opportunity to establish herself as a big dramatic TV star, just like Rosita Ramirez, her idol. Berta becomes obsessed with the idea of impressing the producer of the show, Mr. Figueroa, with her talents and gets everyone involved in "rehearsing" with her.

But when Mr. Figueroa arrives he refers to her as a "little girl" who should "run along now." Berta is crushed, but tries once again to impress him by acting different parts in quick succession with the aid of Mabel's magic. The result, however, is not what she intended: Mr. Figueroa is beginning to form an opinion that his coming to Carrascolendas was a mistake.

One cannot take selfish advantage of friends to further one's own ambitions – especially at their expense – and hope to keep these friends very long. Such unprincipled ambition, furthermore, does not speak well for the person.

Children sometimes model or pattern their behavior after that of others, not realizing that the style of the behavior may not be suited to their personalities or life circumstances. Perhaps in these instances they should consider adopting some of the *traits* of the person – if, again, these are appropriate – but express these in their own individual personalities. Ultimately, of course, one must not be a copy cat, and life's roles must be adapted to one's own needs and style.

ACTIVITY CORNER

Who are some of the movie stars your children admire? What is it about them that they admire most? (Be sure to differentiate *roles* the stars have played from their real *lives*.)

Who are some other people they admire? What have they learned from them? (Be sure to differentiate particular behaviors from more basic traits.)

The Vegetable Parade — Show #436

Carrascolendas is preparing to hold a big parade – a vegetable parade – with everyone dressed as a different vegetable in recognition of the important role which vegetables play in our diet. But Agapito can't decide just what kind of vegetable he wants to be. Miss Hernandez and Pepper take Agapito to visit the Salinas Valley in California, where many kinds of vegetables are grown. Agapito learns not only about vegetables but also about how they are harvested. Salad, anyone? Vegetables can be classified in many different ways: some are stems (celery), some are roots (carrots, potatoes), some are leaves (spinach), some are flowers (broccoli), and some are even fruits (tomatoes). Vegetables can also be classified by their color. Many children don't realize what's involved in getting vegetables to market: raising, picking, preparing, and shipping the vegetables. "The Vegetable Parade" should help them grasp this process and appreciate how hard farm labor really is.

ACTIVITY CORNER

Prepare a chart or mural depicting the process of getting vegetables to market.

If any of the children in your class have had any experience in raising or picking vegetables or fruit, have them share their experiences with the class.

Investigate what vegetables are grown in your area.

Have the children classify vegetables according to what part of the plant they are.

You may wish to invite the school dietician to speak to the children about planning meals and the importance of balanced diets and food with nutritional value.

The contributions of farm laborers to our society may be a theme for discussion in your class. Help the children learn about the hard work involved in picking and getting the vegetable to market. What would happen if there was no one to pick them? Could machines do the job? What does "labor" mean?

Pepper Becomes Pimienta — Show #437

Pepper is painfully aware that almost everyone else in Carrascolendas "is something," that is, belongs to one or another of our non-dominant ethnic groups. She decides to become a Mexican American, but does not quite know how to go about it. Dyana and Berta offer to help her.

Pepper then engages in a series of inappropriate but hilarious activities. She tries to speak only in Spanish, dresses in traditional costumes, makes *tortillas de harina*, and eats jalapeno peppers. The result is that she is still not Mexican American.

"Pepper Becomes Pimienta" is interesting from several points of view. First, it is important that children understand that there are no stereotype ways of doing things within any culture, that people vary in their tastes and in their behavior so that there is no one *right* way of being Chicano, Chinese American, or Anglo.

Secondly, adopting the trappings of a culture are not enough to become a part of it. To become a member of a cultural community one must have personal ties with it, must have a personal stake in the success of its members.

Thirdly, Pepper's struggle to become "Mexican Americanized," which is clearly "unnatural" and which alienates her from her friends, serves to depict in a lighthearted fashion the real and painful struggle which many Mexican Americans and members of other non-dominant ethnic groups go through to become "Americanized," that is, to become more like the dominant Anglo society. The motives for acculturation may be different from Pepper's, but the tearing out of one's cultural roots and the simultaneous desperation to acquire new sets of habits, beliefs, and friends are psychologically unhealthy.

Every person, of course, has the right to try to acculturate, even the members of the dominant society. Do they not also have the right to remain what they are or to develop a *bi*cultural way of life without prejudice?

ACTIVITY CORNER

How many different ethnic groups are represented in the school – do your children know? How varied are the people within the several groups?

You may plan some class activities which illustrate both the traditional ethnic practices and modern alternatives in dress, cooking, sex roles, jobs, etc. for a selected few ethnic minorities, preferably some of those represented in the classroom. Then ask the question, "What does it mean to be Cuban American (or Navajo, or Puerto Rican or Japanese American, or appropriate)?

Ask your children if members of an ethnic minority group inspire them in any way to learn something. What are some of things that a particular group could teach us? If your children cannot come up with really substantial answers, you need to introduce a unit on a few of America's ethnic groups.

The Winning Loser — Show #438

Everyone in Carrascolendas has always made a fuss over Caracoles' tacos. They're the best! The newspaper is sponsoring a recipe contest, and everyone encourages Caracoles to enter his taco recipe, although he is hesitant. "You're certain to win," they all assure him.

Caracoles enters the contest but begins to believe that he's going to win even before the judging takes place. His conceit builds: he closes El Nopal to go shopping for clothes, offers people his autograph, etc.

And then the impossible thing happens – someone else's recipe is selected as the winning recipe. What is Caracoles to do?

As children grow older they normally acquire certain interests and develop special talents to complement them. When they become adults, of course, some of their skills and others acquired in the process of growing up will serve them for pleasure or for work, and may be a source of joy for them.

But while developing these special talents, children and youth cannot abandon their responsibilities to others or come to feel that they are better than their peers, whose talents they refuse to recognize. If this happens, the *status* of their achievements may remain high, but the *esteem* with which they are regarded will be low.

ACTIVITY CORNER

Have your children list some of the interests they've had during the recent past and find out which of these interests they've pursued in some way. Attempt to do things which let them learn more about their interests. At a different point in time, you may wish to see which of these interests have persisted, which are new, and what progress in learning about a consistent interest has been made.

A child's interests – whether temporary or lasting – are highly motivating to a child and permit a teacher to plan such activities as independent study and to transfer or apply classroom learning to the children's areas of interest, thus reinforcing the importance of formal learning. In bilingual classes, second language activities can also be planned around their interests.

Children with specially well developed skills may profitably be given the opportunities to demonstrate them to their peers. But the interest of all the children should be recognized without later forcing them to pretend that an interest has persisted. Children must retain the right to change their minds.

Where In The World Is Carrascolendas — Show #439

"Where in the World is Carrascolendas" is devoted to explaining through symbolic action and dramatic play just what CARRASCOLENDAS means.

Several of the main characters are preparing to leave Carrascolendas. Tio Cheo must return to his family in Miami and Miss Hernandez has accepted a job teaching at an Indian reservation. Everyone is sad about their impending departure, but Tio Cheo and Miss Hernandez feel especially bad, since they have come to love Carrascolendas, what it means, and the people who live there.

What they do not realize is that Carrascolendas has become a part of them, something that they can take with them wherever they go and share with everyone they meet. So the children decide to give them a special goodbye surprise, a didactic play depicting the meaning of Carrascolendas.

"Where in the World is Carrascolendas" is a fitting program on which to close the broadcast series for the 1974-1975 academic year. Perhaps some of your students have asked you about Carrascolendas. This program is intended to convey to them a summary understanding about what all the other programs have been about. The program, however, is not a review of the previous shows. Instead it conveys the idea that Carrascolendas is a way of living together and of understanding ourselves and one another.

ACTIVITY CORNER

Be sure to watch the program with your children and be prepared to review it immediately thereafter. Young children may benefit from watching the program a second time after it has been discussed.

Try to determine the level of understanding which your pupils acquired about the show. Just where *is* Carrascolendas, anyway? Can Carrascolendas be in the classroom or among their friends in their neighborhood? How has Carrascolendas helped them to be better persons, better friends to others? What were some of the symbols in the program and what did they signify?

Have the students try their hand at *symbolizing* the meaning of an idea in a creative, dramatic way instead of acting it out directly. Can they come up with an idea which can be acted out to teach *themselves* a lesson? What are some of the lessons they need to learn?

Discussions leading to the production of such a play will require patient understanding from you, since the problem you pose requires the children to analyze themselves and one another. If they "get stuck," suggest something which you have observed, but select the topic judiciously, being certain not to choose a threatening topic. Success at this level may encourage them to undertake a more relevant subject and, naturally, one more fraught with creative possibilities.